

Zoology 957 Graduate Student Writing Assignments

1. Research paper. An important goal of this course is to teach you to examine and evaluate current literature on evo-devo critically. As a starting point, you will assume the role of an author and write a minimum 5 page (1-1.5 line spacing) research paper. Your paper will consist of one of the following:

- (1) Design a research proposal to test a hypothesis (a “what-should-be-done-next” paper).

or

- (2) Review a major theme in animal evo-devo, where you take a stand on a particular issue.

also acceptable (and encouraged):

- (3) Develop a thesis chapter, manuscript, or preliminary/qualifying exam proposal (if your research pertains to evolution, development, or both).

Regardless of your topic, your writing assignment will include at least one figure of your own design. Your figure can serve various purposes, such as illustrating current understanding of a topic or depicting the design of hypothetical experiments.

Due dates:

Declare topics, 20 October 2017

First draft: 10 November 2017

2. Peer review. Another aim of this course is to introduce you to the peer review process and/or refine your capabilities as a peer reviewer. You will therefore exchange your draft with another graduate student. As a peer reviewer, you will write a maximum 2 page (1-1.5 line spacing) critique of your partner’s research paper, focusing on major issues and providing constructive feedback for improving the draft.

Due dates:

Peer review, 17 November 2017

3. Revision and rebuttal. After reading over the review of your paper, you will prepare two items for submission:

- (1) The final draft of your paper.

and

- (2) A Responses to Reviewers document. This document (maximum 2 page, 1-1.5 line spacing) should be formatted as a letter to the Editor, providing a point-by-point explanation of how reviewer comments were addressed, incorporated, and/or rebutted. Rebuttals should be substantiated by reasoned arguments and/or references to the literature.

Due dates:

Final draft, 8 December 2017

Responses to reviewers, 8 December 2017